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SUBJECT: OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL: STATEMENT ON "ELECTIONS"
IN THE ABKHAZIA REGION OF GEORGIA

11. Post is authorized to make the following statement at the
December 17, 2009, Permanent Council meeting in Vienna:

Begin text:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The United States regrets the decision to hold "elections" in
the Abkhazia region of Georgia on December 12, and recognizes
neither their legitimacy nor the results.

We reiterate our support for Georgia's sovereignty and
territorial integrity within its internationally recognized
borders.

We remain committed to the achievement of a long-term,
peaceful resolution to the conflict. We strongly support the
Geneva Talks and related mechanisms and urge all parties to
work together constructively to achieve concrete progress on
issues of mutual concern.

We also renew our call for Russia to fulfill the provisions
of the August 12 cease-fire agreement and the September 8
implementing measures, including the withdrawal of Russian
troops to positions held prior to the start of hostilities
and the provision of free access for humanitarian assistance
to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
Russia's characterization of these regions as independent
does not relieve it of these commitments.

We remain convinced that the continued involvement of the
international community is critical. We firmly believe an
international presence should be established throughout
Georgia, and once more call for access to the South Ossetia
and Abkhazia regions for international monitors.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

END TEXT
CLINTON